

No. 21

NOV-DEC. 1997

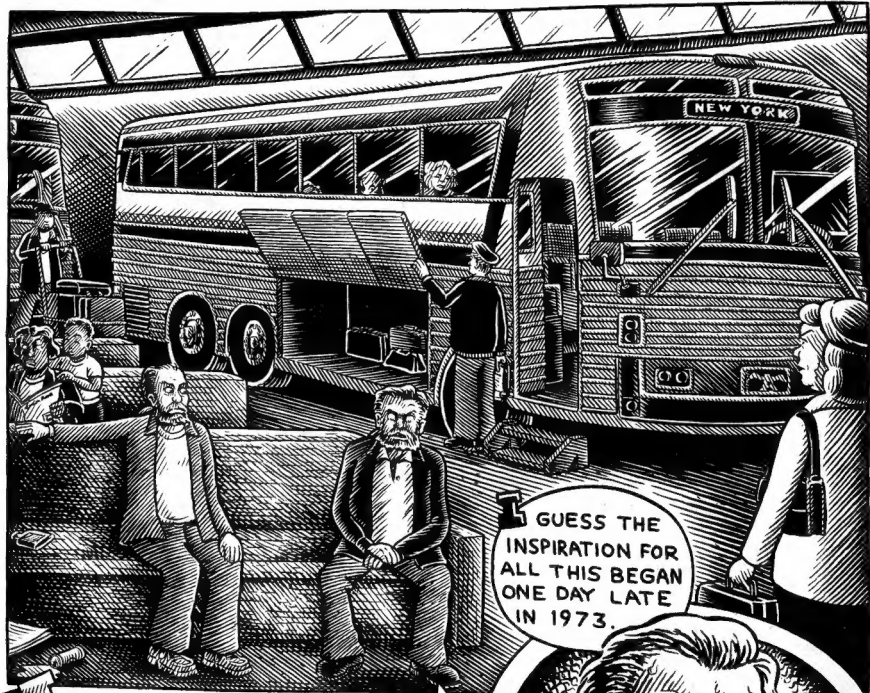
\$3.95 / \$5.50 IN CANADA



THE MAN WHO WOULD BE WALDO!

AND MORE!





I GUESS THE  
INSPIRATION FOR  
ALL THIS BEGAN  
ONE DAY LATE  
IN 1973.

I WAS SITTING IN THE SAN FRANCISCO  
BUS DEPOT, WAITING TO PUT MY JUNKIE  
BROTHER ON A NEW YORK BOUND BUS.

HE'D BURNED ALL HIS BRIDGES IN THE  
BAY AREA, AND A LOT OF PEOPLE TOO.



IT WAS  
TIME FOR HIM  
TO BEAT IT,  
AND BOY  
WAS HE IN  
BAD SHAPE!

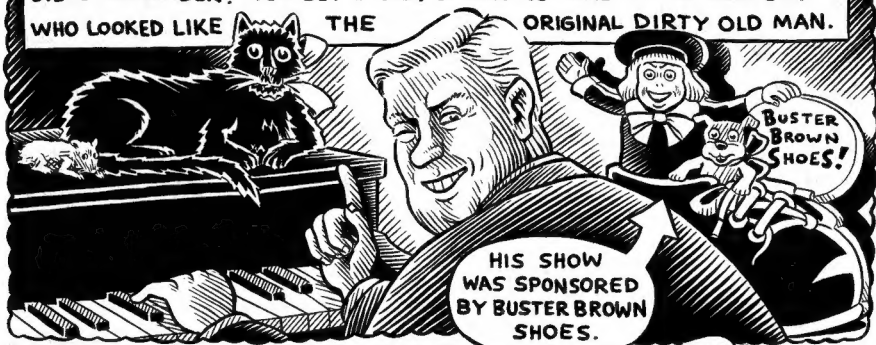


ANYWAY SUDDENLY, APROPOS OF  
NOTHING, HE TURNED AND SAID,

HEY! REMEMBER THAT OLD T.V. SHOW WE  
USED TO WATCH, SMILIN' ED'S GANG?



DID I REMEMBER? YOU BET I DID! SMILIN' ED WAS A FAT OLD GUY WHO LOOKED LIKE THE ORIGINAL DIRTY OLD MAN.



HIS SHOW WAS SPONSORED BY BUSTER BROWN SHOES.

EVEN THEN WE KIDS COULD TELL, THAT ON ED'S SHOW, BUSTER BROWN WAS REALLY PLAYED BY THIS WEIRD-LOOKING MIDGET.

I'M BUSTER BROWN, I LIVE IN A SHOE. HERE'S MY DOG TIGE, HE LIVES THERE TOO.



ED WOULD TELL STORIES OUT OF A BIG BOOK THAT SEGUED INTO CHEESY FILMED ADVENTURES.

I'VE GOT TO ADMIT, THEY WERE A BIG SNORE; USUALLY ABOUT SOME KID IN INDIA.

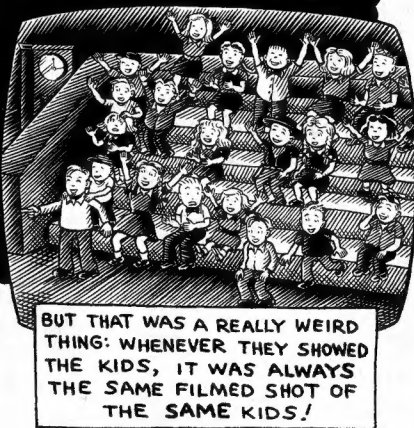
THEN ED WOULD BRING ON HIS ANIMAL SIDE-KICKS. THERE WAS SQUEAKY THE MOUSE, PLAYED BY A HAMSTER, AND MIDNIGHT THE CAT, WHO MAY HAVE BEEN STUFFED, AND WHO SAID ONLY ONE WORD, NICE.



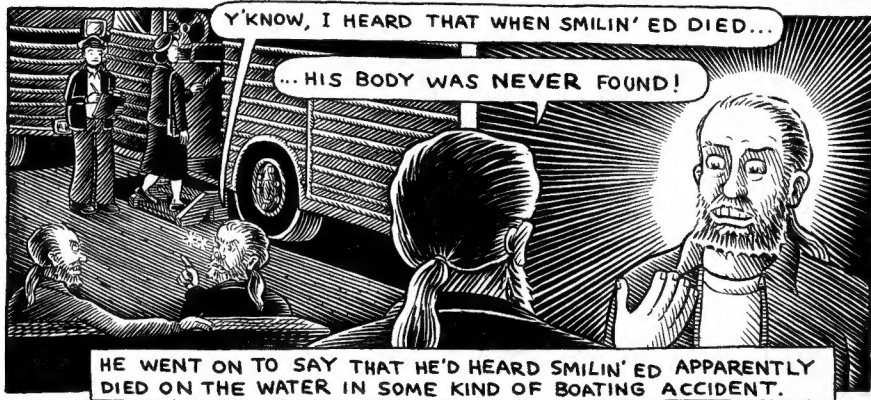
THE MOST MEMORABLE PART OF THE SHOW CAME WHEN FROGGY THE GREMLIN SHOWED UP. HE'D MATERIALIZE ON TOP OF AN OLD GRANDFATHER CLOCK.



AND PROCEED TO DISRUPT A COMEDY LECTURE OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER.



ANYWAY, AFTER I ACKNOWLEDGED REMEMBERING THE SHOW, MY BROTHER SAID,...



I THINK I MIGHT HAVE MADE SOME LAME CRACK AT THAT POINT ABOUT FROGGY PULLING ED UNDER THE SEA, BUT I'M NOT SURE;



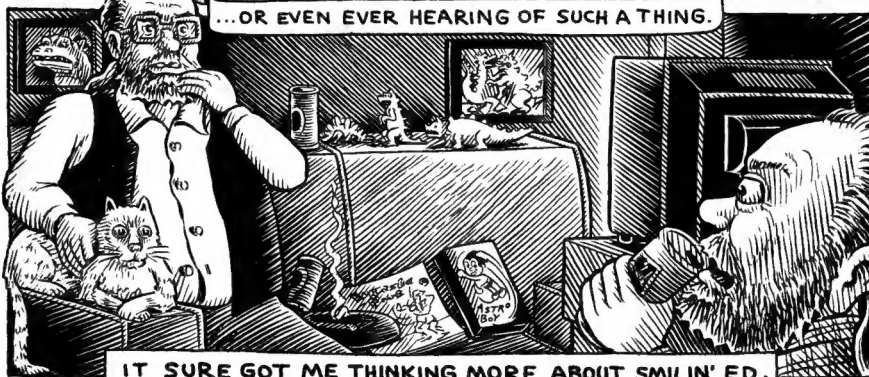
THE NEXT TIME I SAW MY BROTHER, HE'D KICKED THE HABIT, GOT MARRIED, AND OWNED HIS OWN HOUSE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY.



HIS ODD REMARK ABOUT SMILIN' ED HAD STAYED WITH ME, BUT WHEN I BROUGHT IT UP, HE HAD NO MEMORY OF EVER SAYING IT,

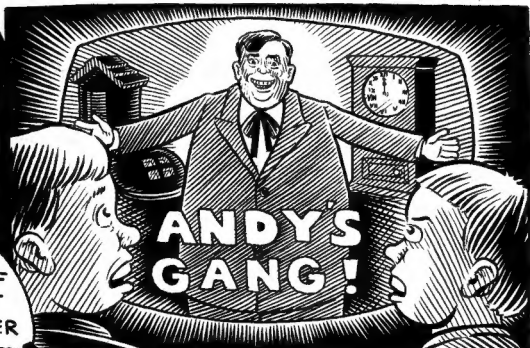


...OR EVEN EVER HEARING OF SUCH A THING.





THE THING IS, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT HIS BODY WAS EVER FOUND, HERE INDEED WAS A TRULY DISAPPEARED PERSONALITY.



AFTER SMILIN' ED DIED IN 1954, THE SHOW LEFT THE AIR ONLY TO REAPPEAR A YEAR LATER AS ANDY'S GANG, HOSTED BY HOLLYWOOD FAT MAN, ANDY DEVINE.

BUT OUTSIDE OF SOME NEW FOOTAGE OF DEVINE, IT WAS THE SAME OLD SHOW, RECYCLED.



... SAME TIRED OLD ADVENTURES,



SAME MIDGET BUSTER BROWN,



SAME MIDNIGHT, SQUEAKY, AND FROGGY THE GREMLIN,



EVEN THE SAME SHOT OF THOSE SAME DAMN KIDS.

SAME DAMN EVERYTHING, EXCEPT FOR SMILIN' ED HIMSELF!



TODAY, IF THE SHOW IS REMEMBERED AT ALL, ...

YOU MEAN THAT WEIRD SHOW WITH FROGGY THE GREMLIN?

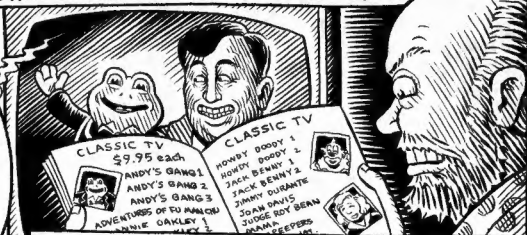
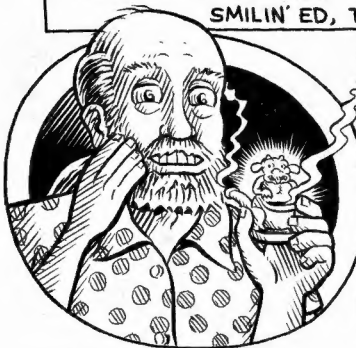
YEAH, THAT WAS FAR FUCKIN' OUT!

... IT'S USUALLY IN ITS REINCARNATED FORMAT AS ANDY'S GANG.

YEAH, WITH THAT FAT GUY! YEAH, ANDY'S GANG!

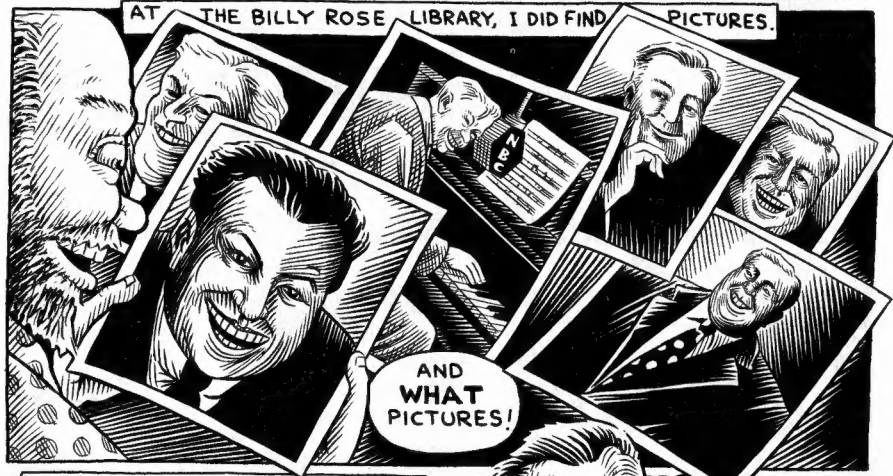


IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT IF I COULD FIND OUT A LITTLE MORE ABOUT SMILIN' ED, THERE MIGHT BE A GOOD STORY IN IT.

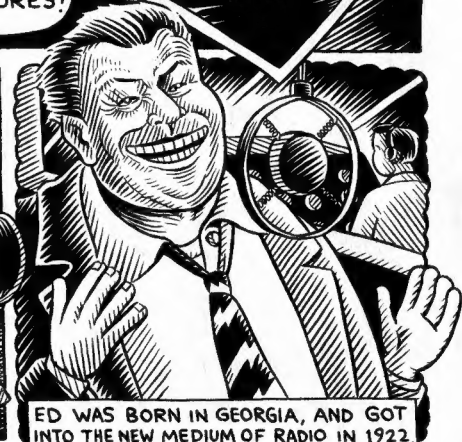
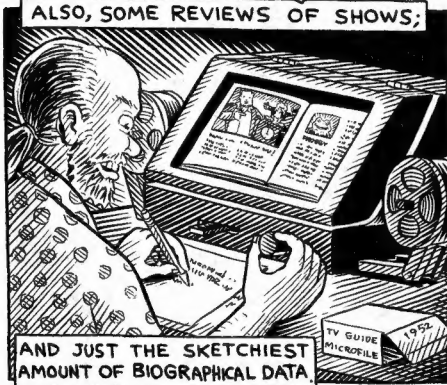


BUT POKING AROUND, I DISCOVERED THAT ABSOLUTELY NO SMILIN' ED SHOWS WERE AVAILABLE ON THE VIDEO TAPE MARKET. ANDY'S GANG? YES. SMILIN' ED? FORGET IT!

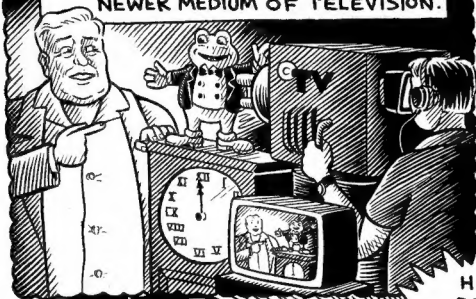
AT THE BILLY ROSE LIBRARY, I DID FIND PICTURES.



ALSO, SOME REVIEWS OF SHOWS;



SO HE WAS ALREADY A LONG-TIME VETERAN KIDDIE HOST IN 1950, WHEN HE TOOK A FLYER IN THE EVEN NEWER MEDIUM OF TELEVISION.



AND FINALLY, TANTALIZINGLY, HE DIED IN 1954 OF AN APPARENT HEART ATTACK ON A CABIN CRUISER HE OWNED.

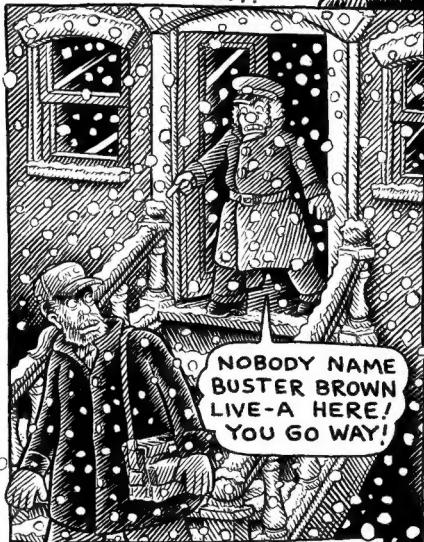


HE  
DID  
DIE ON A  
BOAT!

**B**UT THAT WAS IT; OR ALMOST IT. THERE WAS ONE OTHER LITTLE PEARL OF INFORMATION ONE OF HIS OBITS DID MENTION THAT A MEMORIAL WAS HELD AT SOMETHING CALLED THE BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM AT 119 EAST 36TH STREET, IN NEW YORK CITY. I DECIDED TO CHECK IT OUT.



WHAT I FOUND WAS A BEAUTIFUL TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY BROWNSTONE, JUST OFF PARK AVENUE.



NOBODY NAME  
BUSTER BROWN  
LIVE-A HERE!  
YOU GO WAY!

BUT THE WEIRD GEEK WHO WAS GUARDING THE PLACE WAS NEITHER HELPFUL OR FRIENDLY.

JUST ON A HUNCH, I ASKED AT A NEARBY COMIC BOOK STORE IF THEY KNEW OF ANY SORT OF BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM HAVING BEEN IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE KID BEHIND THE COUNTER KNEW NOTHING AND CARED LESS.

BUSTER WHO?

BUT THE OWNER WAS FRIENDLIER AND WAS ACTUALLY FAIRLY HELPFUL.

IT TURNED OUT THAT SMILIN' ED COMICS, PRODUCED AS A PROMOTIONAL GIVEAWAY BY BUSTER BROWN SHOES IN THE 1950'S ARE FAIRLY COLLECTABLE.

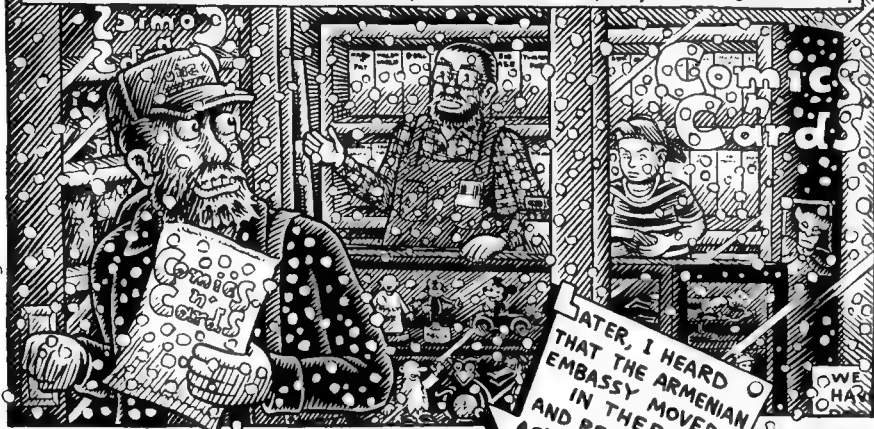
THE TV SHOW'S DULL ADVENTURE SEGMENTS WERE DRAWN IN THE COMICS BY REED CRANDALL, ONE OF THE ALL-TIME GREAT COMIC BOOK ARTISTS.

WHAT'S MORE, THIS GUY HAD HEARD STORY'S OF A BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM AT 116 EAST 36TH STREET TOO; AND HAD EVEN LOOKED INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF OPENING HIS STORE THERE.

BUT THE BUILDING TURNED OUT TO BE NOT FOR RENT AT ANY PRICE.



AND AS I WAS LEAVING, HE LET FLY WITH A PARTING SHOT. APPARENTLY THE BUILDING HAD THE REPUTATION, IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, OF BEING HAUNTED!



## PART 2

LISSEN!  
IF DEITCH  
HAPPIN' OUT IN  
Y DEPARTMENT  
FEW YEARS,  
AIN'T **MY**  
FAULT!

**HEY!**  
I GAVE HIM  
**PLENTY OF**  
IDEAS!

**CHECK THIS OUT.**  
**A FAGGOT CYBORG**  
**AIDS MONSTER IS**  
**JERKING OFF IN THE**  
**NEW YORK CITY**  
**RESERVOIR! \***

**IF IT COMES, EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD  
IN NEW YORK WILL GET AIDS!**

JEANWHILE, I'M IN MY  
MANHATTAN PENTHOUSE,  
HAVING ABSOLUTELY SAFE SEX  
WITH SIGOURNEY WEAVER.  
BUT HEY! WHEN DUTY  
CALLS, ... I'M READY!

IN A HIGH TECH ROBOT OF MY OWN DESIGN, I KICK MAJOR BUTT!  
THE CLIMACTIC BATTLE IS FAN-FUCKING-TASTIC! BUT WAY TOO COOL FOR DEITCH!



SO THEN I GAVE HIM RAPPIN' RASTIS! TOTALLY UP TO DATE!  
IN THIS ONE I WOULD HAVE PLAYED AN AFRICAN AMERICAN  
HOMELESS GUY WITH TWO FISTS OF IRON AND  
THE MYSTIC SOUL OF A POET!

YO' SLAVIN' WAYS IS AT HALF MAST!

YO' ASS  
IS GRASS!

WE  
MOVIN'  
FAST!

IN IT, ME AND A MILLION BLACK  
MEN, OVERTHROW AMERIKA'S ENSLAVING  
POWER STRUCTURE!

FO' BETTAH DAYS,  
A NEWER PHASE!

THAT'S GONNA LEAVE YOU  
INNA DAZE!

AFTER OFFING A  
FEW RING LEADERS,  
WE MAKE THEM  
INTO SLAVES  
AND ABOLISH  
THE INCOME  
TAX!

TOTALLY VISIONARY!



BUT DID HE GIVE IT A CHANCE?

HELL NO!

HE'D JUST SIT MOPING LIKE I WASN'T EVEN THERE!



TRYING TO WORK UP SOME FUCKED-UP NOSTALGIA STORY ABOUT A FAT OLD TV STAR FROM THE YEAR ONE!

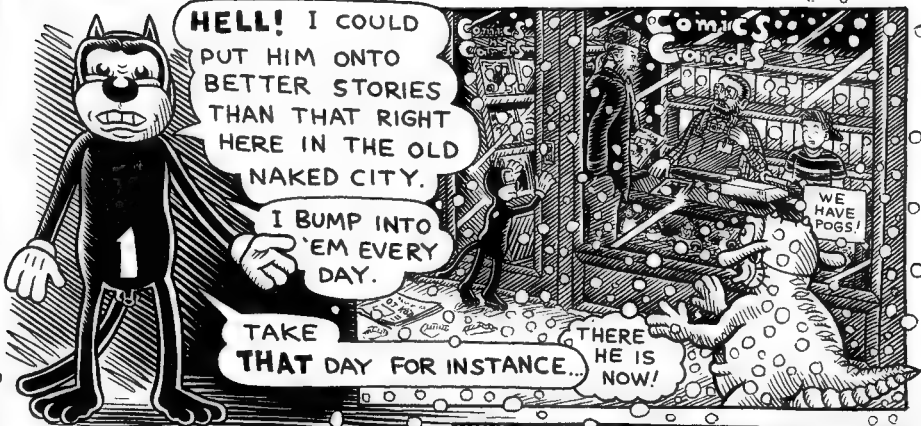
AT A CERTAIN POINT, I DECIDED IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO MOVE ON. LAST I HEARD, HE WAS DOIN' SOMETHING CALLED FINGER LICKIN' RUNAWAYS FOR SOME KID'S MAGAZINE.



THEN ONE DAY, ABOUT A YEAR AGO, I SAW HIM IN AN UPSCALE COMIC BOOK STORE, OVER ON PARK AVENUE.



POOR OLD DEITCH, THE OLD DOBBIN OF COMICS!



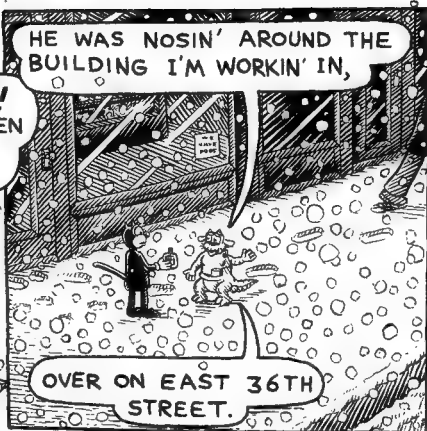






WALKS RIGHT  
BY LIKE HE  
DON'T EVEN ...

HEY!  
I'VE SEEN  
THAT  
GUY!



HE WAS NOSIN' AROUND THE  
BUILDING I'M WORKIN' IN,

OVER ON EAST 36TH  
STREET.



YEAH, ME AND A BUNCH  
OF THE OLD GANG ARE  
OVER THERE HAUNTIN'  
TH' PLACE!

YEAH?



SOFT JOB TOO!  
HEY! WHY DON'T  
YOU COME OVER!

WE  
HAVE  
POGS

COME ON! IT'LL BE  
A REGULAR OLD HOME WEEK!



AND SO ...

WALDO!  
YOU OLD-A  
SON OF A BITCH!

SHOTSY!

SO! SHOTS. YOU STILL RUNNIN' ERRANDS FOR THAT OLD SHIT BAG ABRAXAS?

YEAH SURE!

THAT'S A HIM RIGHT OVER THERE!

WELL, WHAT DO Y'KNOW! SO HOW'S IT HANGIN' BRAXY?

FUCK YOU!

AH, SAME OLD CHARM BOY I SEE.

AH NEVER MIND - A HIM! COME ON! YEAH!

OOOOOH WA-A-LDO!

HEY! HEY!

LOOKA WHO'S HERE!

WALDO! So Good  
to SEE YOU!

BEHE-E-MOTH!

(KOFF KOFF)

HEY!

IT TURNED OUT THAT  
THIS MOTLEY CREW OF  
DEMONS HAD BEEN  
HIRED TO SCARE A  
SNOOPING INTRUDER.

IF ANYONE COMES  
AROUND...

...I  
JUST  
GIVE 'EM  
THE OLD  
BEHEMOTH  
SPECIAL  
SEE?

UH  
YEAH!

OR ONE OF  
MY TOUGH TITTIES  
WILL TAKE A  
BITE OUT  
OF  
CRIME!

YOW!

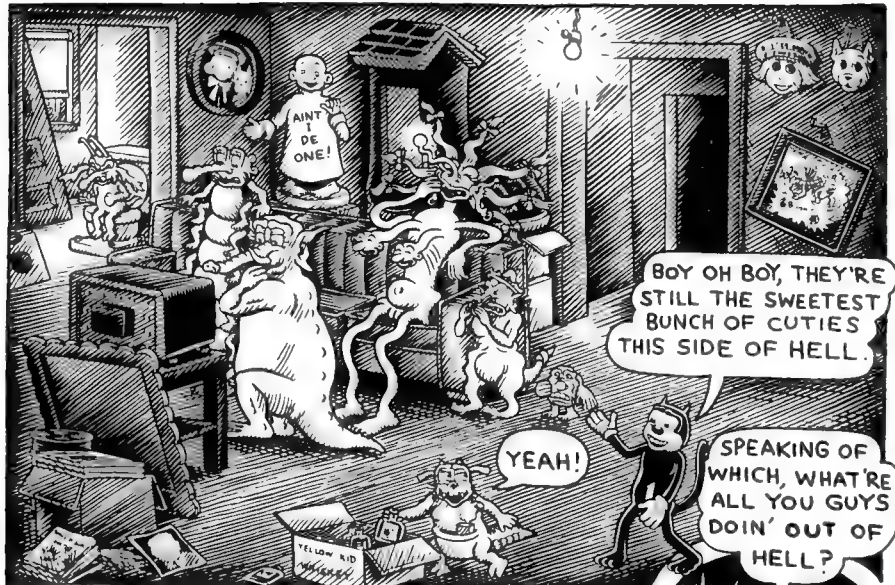
HECATE! YOU CUT-A DAT OUT!

HEY YOU!  
LAY OFF  
HIM SEE!

THEN KEEP YOUR  
LITTLE BLOW BOY  
AWAY FROM

ME!

OH REE-LLY!



WELL, UH, Y'SEE, THIS PLACE WAS SOME KIND OF A MUSEUM. YEAH, TH' BUSTER BROWN MUSEUM; AND WE'RE GUARDIN' IT 'TILL THE GUYS THAT HIRED US CAN GET THIS BUSTER BROWN STUFF OUTTA HERE!

OH MAN!

WHAT DEITCH WOULDN'T GIVE TO SEE THAT!

OH YEAH, THAT'S SMILIN' ED. WE WATCH HIS SHOW EVERY DAY.



WHAT'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT! THAT SHOW  
AINT BEEN ON IN YEARS!



HEY WALDO!  
YOU'RE  
ON T.V.!

HUH?

HEY!  
HEY!  
IT'S-A  
WALDO!

HEY  
KIDSH!

WAIT A MINUTE!

WITH MOUNTING RAGE I WATCHED, AS  
A SORRY PAGEANT, ALMOST FORGOTTEN,



HEY  
KIDS!



YOW!



WHAT  
TH' FUCK!

UNFOLDED UPON THE LITTLE SCREEN,



...UNTIL FINALLY  
I COULDN'T STAND  
IT ANOTHER SECOND!

LISSEN! GO AHEAD AND  
LAUGH IF YOU WANT,  
BUT THAT  
AIN'T ME!

UH  
HUH!

YEAH,  
SURE!  
SURE!

THAT'S RIGHT!

BLARNEY  
ROSE  
BAR

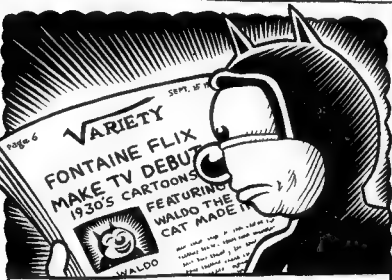
BAR

AND IF YOU'LL  
ALL JUST  
SHUT YER  
YAPS A  
MINUTE,  
I'LL  
TELL  
YA  
ABOUT,

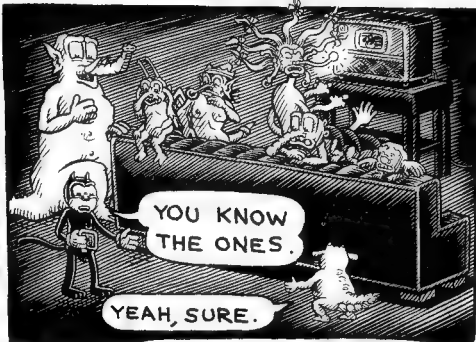
HEY! IT WAS  
WEIRD!

AND THE WHOLE THING PROBABLY  
NEVER WOULD HAVE HAPPENED  
BUT FOR A TWIST OF FATE THAT  
FOUND ME OUT IN FRONT OF THE  
BLARNEY ROSE BAR IN 1954.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE WALDO!

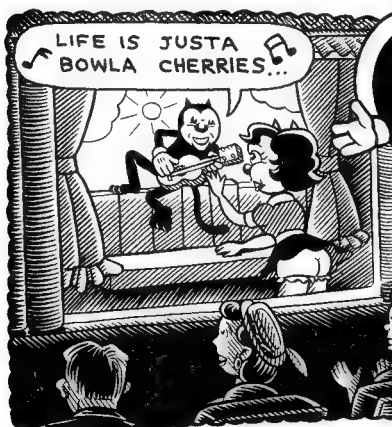


I'D JUST BEEN READING THAT THE  
OLD FONTAINE FABLES CARTOONS WERE  
ABOUT TO BE RELEASED TO T.V.



YOU KNOW  
THE ONES.

YEAH, SURE.



LIFE IS JUST A  
BOWLA CHERRIES...

WELL NATURALLY THIS  
INTERESTED ME, SINCE MOST  
OF THOSE CARTOONS STARRED  
YOURS TRULY.

AND IN THE 1930S,  
WHEN HE WAS JUST A  
KID, LITTLE WALDY FELDER  
WAS MY  
BIGGEST FAN.

SHORT IN STATURE AND LARGE IN NOSE, WALLY ACTUALLY LOOKED SOMETHING LIKE ME.

LIFE IS JUST A BOWLA CHERRIES!

AND HE'D OFTEN AMUSE THE OTHER KIDS BY IMPERSONATING ME.

OF COURSE I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THIS WHEN

AND HE'D OFTEN AMUSE  
THE OTHER KIDS BY  
IMPERSONATING ME.

HE CAME FLYING OUT OF THE BLARNEY ROSE BAR THAT DAY.

FUCK YOU WALDO!

DIG YOU LATER, WALDO! OLD BOY!

WELL NATURALLY WHEN I HEARD ALL THESE CRACKS COMING FROM THE BAR ABOUT "WALDO," I WAS SURE THEY WERE FOR ME!

YEAH, FUCK OFF WALDO!

UH HUH.

WELL NATURALLY WHEN I HEARD ALL THESE CRACKS COMING FROM THE BAR ABOUT "WALDO," I WAS SURE THEY WERE FOR ME!

DIG  
YOU  
LATER,  
WALDO  
OLD  
BOY!

YEAH, FUCK OFF WALDO!

BUT WHEN I DARE THEM TO SAY THAT STUFF TO MY FACE, THEY MARCHED RIGHT BACK INTO THAT BAR LIKE I WASN'T THERE!

WHICH REALLY SHOULDN'T HAVE SURPRISED ME.

IT WAS THEIR CALLING MY NAME THAT THREW ME!

THEN WALLY PIPED UP AND SAID...

...KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON, MISTER, THOSE INSULTS WERE MEANT FOR ME.

IT WAS THEIR CALLING  
MY NAME THAT THREW ME!

...KEEP YOUR SHIRT ON, MISTER, THOSE INSULTS WERE MEANT FOR ME.

...YA SEE, THEY THINK I'M Y,...  
THEN HE LOOKED AND SAW ME!

**YOW!**

WELL YOU KNOW,  
SINCE HE THOUGHT  
I WAS JUST SOME  
IMAGINARY CARTOON  
CHARACTER, SEEIN'  
ME KIND OF  
THREW HIM.

SO I CUT HIM IN ON  
THE WINE I WAS DRINKING  
AND CLUED HIM IN ON  
A FEW THINGS...

I EXPLAINED THAT I WAS  
AS REAL AS HE WAS,

BUT  
BEING A  
LOW GRADE  
DEMON AND  
ALL,

...ONLY A FEW FLAKEY LOSERS  
LIKE HIMSELF COULD ACTUALLY SEE ME.

HEY!  
TELL ME  
ABOUT  
IT!

LIKE THAT PITIFUL BUM, NATHAN  
MISHKIN, THAT I TRAINED UP  
TO DO ALL THOSE WALDO  
ANIMATED CARTOONS.

AND YOU  
BETTER BELIEVE  
I STRAIGHTENED  
HIM OUT ON WHO  
THE **REAL** BRAINS  
ON THAT DEAL  
WAS!

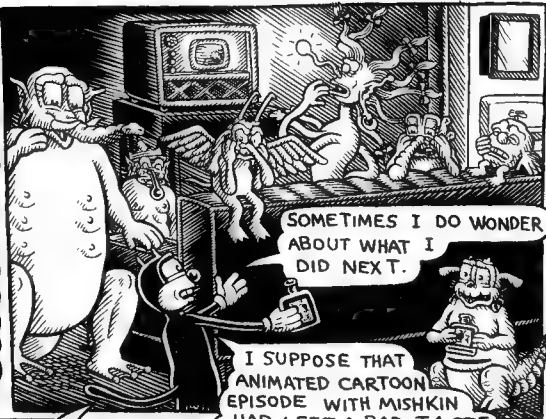
AND WALLY FILLED  
ME IN ON HIS OWN  
PITIFUL BACKGROUND.

LIFE IS JUST A  
BOWLA CHERRIES.

HE WAS **STILL** DOIN' THAT TIRED OUT  
IMPERSONATION OF ME IN BARS,  
CADGIN'DRINKS WITH IT WHEN HE COULD.



BUT AS HE BABBLLED ON,  
I TOOK ANOTHER LOOK AT  
MY PAPER, AND AN IDEA  
TOOK HOLD.



SOMETIMES I DO WONDER  
ABOUT WHAT I  
DID NEXT.

I SUPPOSE THAT  
ANIMATED CARTOON  
EPISODE WITH MISHKIN  
HAD LEFT A BAD TASTE  
IN MY MOUTH.

I GUESS I JUST HAD TO PROVE I COULD DO IT AGAIN,  
AND WITH THE COMMONEST CONCEIVABLE CLAY.

LIFE IS JUSTA BOWLA  
CHERRIES,



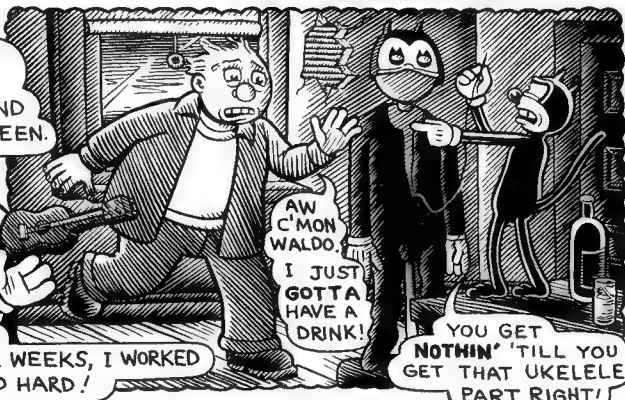
AND IN WALLY  
FELDER, I  
SAW THAT  
CLAY.

DON'T  
TAKE IT  
SERIOUS,  
IT'S TOO  
MYSTERIOUS

MY IDEA  
WAS TO DRESS  
HIM UP LIKE ME,  
TEACH HIM SOME  
OF MY OLD  
ROUTINES,

AND TO TRY TO ENSCONCE HIM  
AS HOST OF THE FONTAINE  
FABLES CARTOON  
SHOW ON T.V.

HELL, ALL HE'D  
REALLY HAVE TO DO  
WAS INTRODUCE MY  
OLD CARTOONS AND  
SELL STUFF INBETWEEN.



JUST THE SAME,  
FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS, I WORKED  
THAT SAP LONG AND HARD!

AW  
C'MON  
WALDO,  
I JUST  
GOTTA  
HAVE A  
DRINK!

YOU GET  
**NOTHIN'** 'TILL YOU  
GET THAT UKELELE  
PART RIGHT!



AND WHEN FONTAINE FUNTIME PREMIERED, BY GOD, WALLY FELDER WAS ME!

HI GANG!

WALLY WAS ACTUALLY MORE POPULAR THAN THE CARTOONS! AND HE WAS GREAT AT COMMERCIALS.

SO KIDS, GET MOM TO PUT BOVRIL BEEF EXTRACT IN SOME HOT MILK.

OKAY WALDO!

IT'LL PUT SOME HEY! HEY! IN YOUR DAY! THE WALDO WAY!

HEY MOM!

IT SEEMED LIKE HE COULD SELL JUST ABOUT ANYTHING.

PREDICTABLY, IT ALL WENT TO HIS HEAD. HE BEGAN TO WEAR THAT DAMN WALDO SUIT EVERYWHERE!

C'MON WALLY, WE'VE GOT TEN PAGES TO LEARN! REALLY!

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY!

KEEP THOSE DRINKS COMING MY MAN.

I COULDN'T GET HIM TO REHEARSE, AND WORSE YET, HE WAS STARTING TO TREAT ME LIKE A LACKEY. SOMETHING DEFINITELY HAD TO GIVE!

THE WAY I SAW IT,  
WALLY NEEDED A  
LESSON.



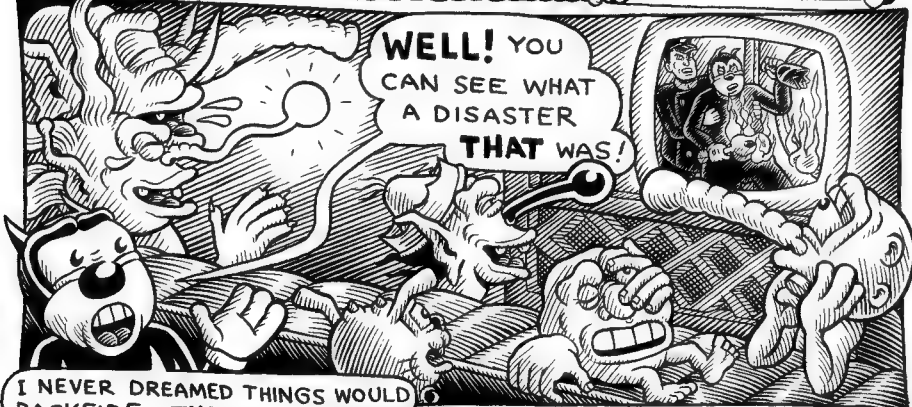
SO ON APRIL FIRST, 1954, INSTEAD OF  
DOING THE SHOW WITH WALLY...

AND AWAY WE GO!



... I DECIDED TO SIT  
ONE OUT AND WATCH  
THE SHOW FROM A  
LOCAL BAR.

WELL! YOU  
CAN SEE WHAT  
A DISASTER  
THAT WAS!



I NEVER DREAMED THINGS WOULD  
BACKFIRE THAT BAD!

BUT WALLY WAS  
IN NO FORGIVING  
MOOD. HE WAS  
THROUGH ON T.V.  
AND THROUGH  
WITH ME TOO.

HE DID MANAGE  
TO BUM DRINKS  
ON THE STRENGTH  
OF HIS NOTORIETY  
FOR AWHILE.

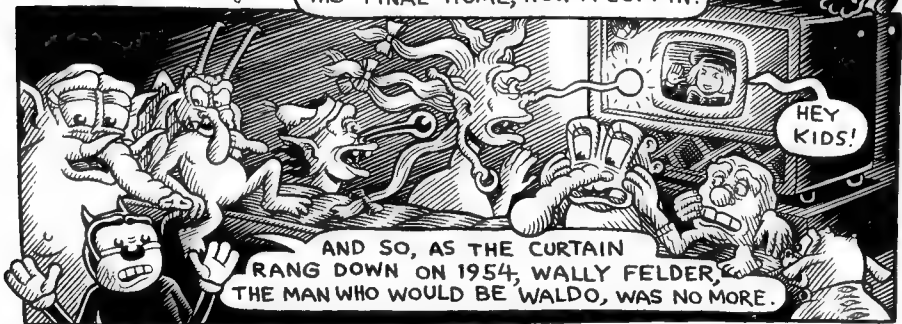


BUT THEN WINTER CAME...

I KINDA LOST TOUCH WITH WALLY AFTER THAT, ALTHOUGH I DID HEAR HE WAS WORKIN' IN THE HUBERT'S MUSEUM FREAK SHOW OVER ON 42ND STREET.



AND IT PROBABLY HASTENED WALLY'S INEVITABLE FINISH.



HEY!  
Look! Look!  
SMILIN' ED!

OOH!

HUH?



WELL I'LL BE  
DAMNED!

HEY! DOWN IN FRONT!



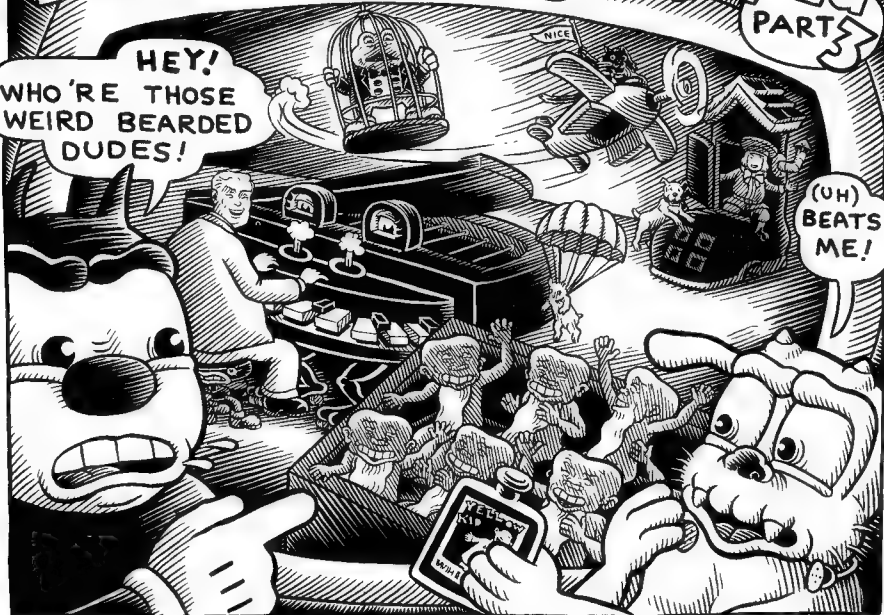


AND BRÚ-THER! IT WAS WEIRDER AND WACKIER THAN EVER!

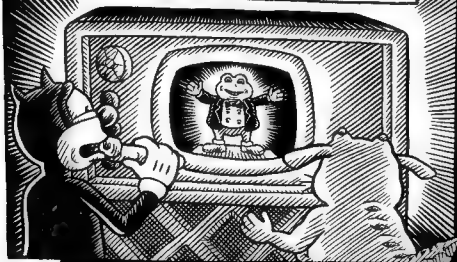
# The Search For Smilin' Ed

PART 3

HEY!  
WHO'RE THOSE  
WEIRD  
BEARDED  
DUDES!



THEN FROGGY DID HIS TURN,  
WHICH AT FIRST, WASN'T SO  
DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD SHOW.



THIS OLD WESTERN GUY WAS  
SHOWING HOW TO MAKE SOUR  
DOUGH BISCUITS IN THE  
BARREL OF A GIANT GUN.



AFTER POURING IN THE INGREDIENTS, HE  
PROPOSED TO FIRE THE GUN AND  
SHOOT OUT THE FINISHED BISCUITS.



NEXT  
WE POUR IN THE...

THAT'S RIGHT. WE  
POUR THE RUSTY  
NAILS RIGHT  
DOWN INTO...



HAW! HAW!  
HAW! HAW!  
HAW!

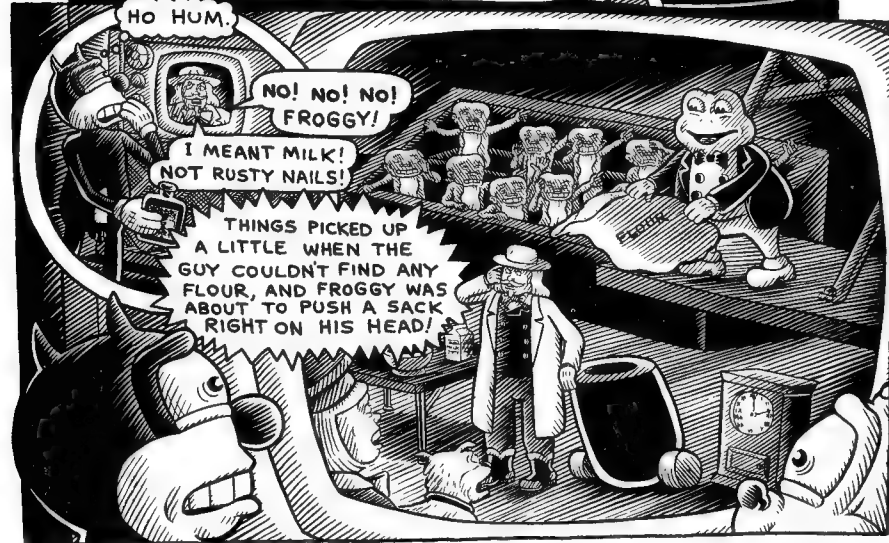
RUSTY NAILS! HAW! HAW!

HO HUM.

NO! NO! NO!  
FROGGY!

I MEANT MILK!  
NOT RUSTY NAILS!

THINGS PICKED UP  
A LITTLE WHEN THE  
GUY COULDN'T FIND ANY  
FLOUR, AND FROGGY WAS  
ABOUT TO PUSH A SACK  
RIGHT ON HIS HEAD!



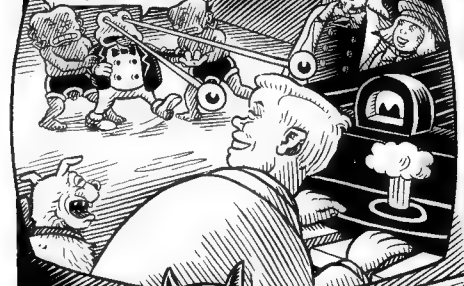
EXCEPT BUSTER BROWN'S DOG,  
TIGE, PUSHED FROGGY INSTEAD.



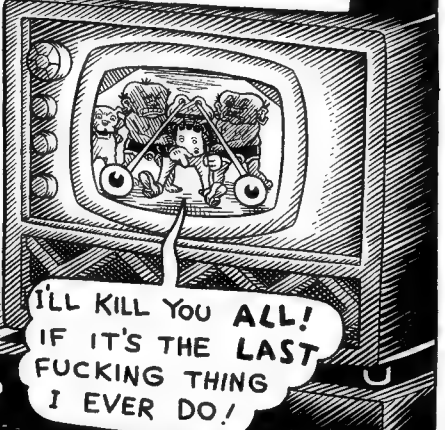
AND A MOMENT LATER, BUSTER  
SHOT FROGGY FROM  
THE BIG GUN!



AND FROGGY JUST TOTALLY  
LOST IT!  
YOU FUCKING  
BASTARDS!



IT WAS WEIRD!

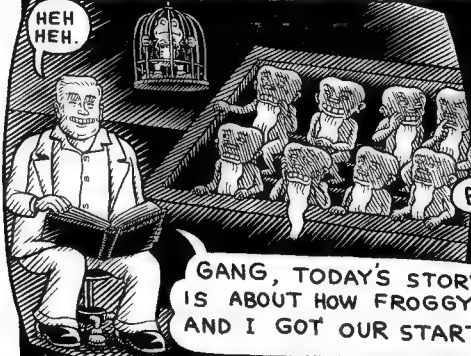


Y'KNOW, THERE'S  
SOMETHING KINDA  
FAMILIAR ABOUT  
THAT GUY!



BUT THE BIG SURPRISE CAME DURING THE SHOW'S STORY TIME SEGMENT.

HEH  
HEH.



GANG, TODAY'S STORY  
IS ABOUT HOW FROGGY  
AND I GOT OUR START.

BAH!

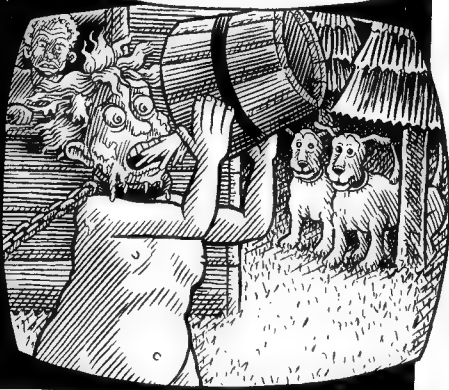
OUR STORY  
BEGINS IN 1905,  
SOMEWHERE IN  
THE GEORGIA  
PINES!



SMILIN' ED'S STORIES

NOW PICTURE ME, A LAD  
OF TEN, CHAINED NAKED BEHIND A  
CABIN, BEING FATTENED LIKE  
A SLAUGHTER BOUND FARM  
ANIMAL!

I COULDN'T REMEMBER HOW  
I'D GOTTEN THERE OR WHO I  
WAS! BUT LITTLE BY LITTLE,  
AS I PUT ON WEIGHT,



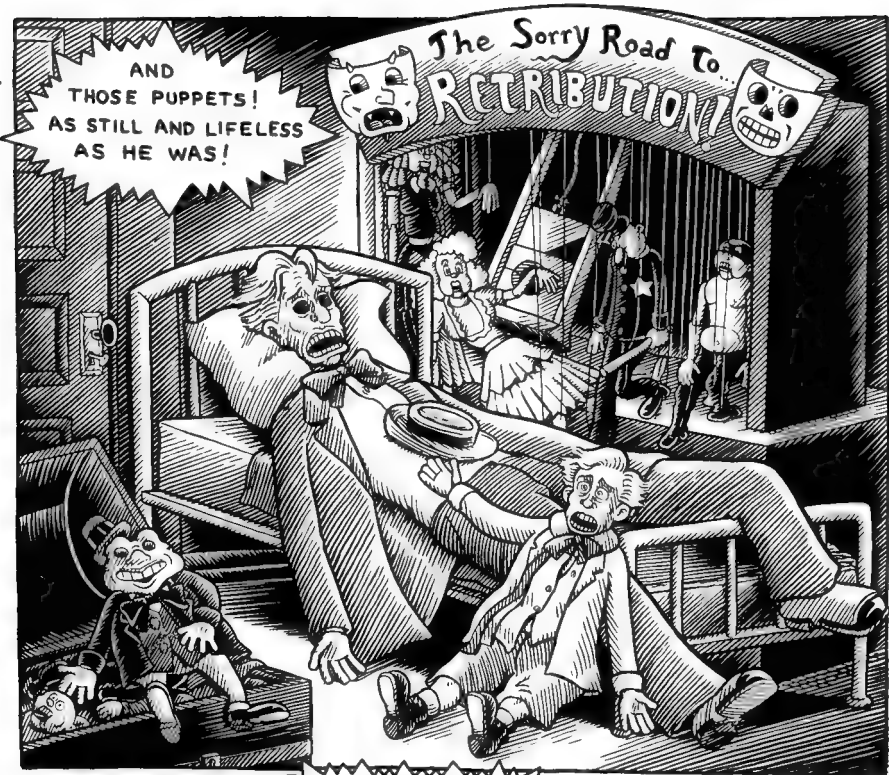
... SMALL FRAGMENTS OF MEMORY BEGAN TO RETURN.

ME,  
IN A  
STRANGE  
ROOM!

... LOUD  
POUNDING ON  
A DOOR,

... A BODY WITH NO  
EYES IN ITS SKULL!

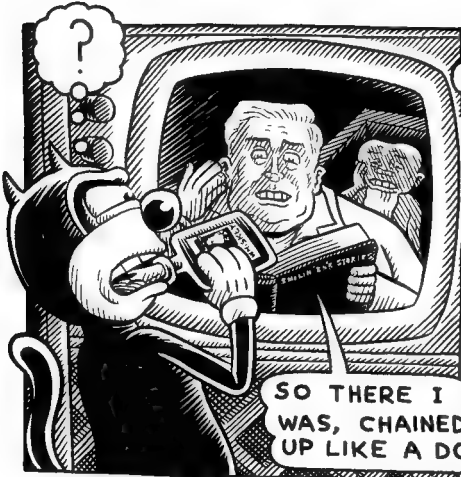




THEN THE POLICE!







SO THERE I WAS, CHAINED UP LIKE A DOG!

AND ALL THE WHILE, THE OLD BLACK MAN THAT LIVED THERE, JUST KEPT FEEDING ME AND FATTENING ME UP!



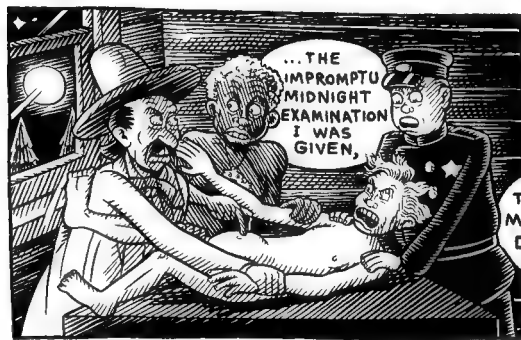
WHEN I BEGAN TO CALM DOWN, THE MAN LET ME COME INSIDE FOR MORE FOOD, ALWAYS MORE FOOD!



AND THE MORE I ATE, THE MORE I REMEMBERED.



IT CAME BACK TO ME, HOW I WAS FIRST BROUGHT THERE, TOTALLY OUT OF MY HEAD!



...THE IMPROMPTU MIDNIGHT EXAMINATION I WAS GIVEN,



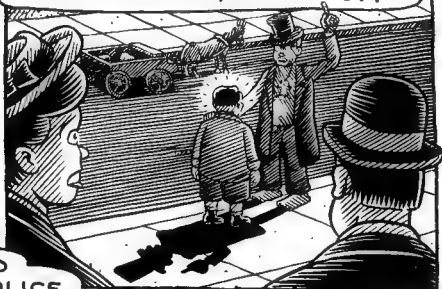
...AND THE BLACK MAN'S STRANGE DIAGNOSIS...

DEY'S A DEMON INSIDE O' HIM. WE GOTTS TO FATTEN HIM UP TO KEEP IT DOWN!

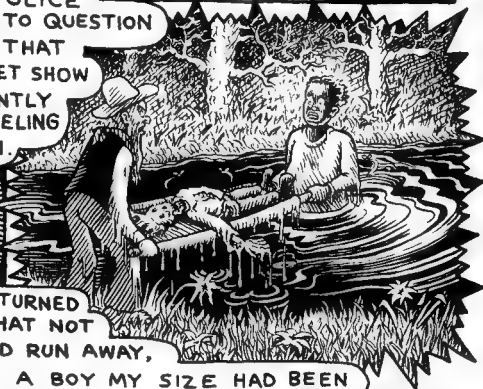
WELL, THE FATTENING DID BRING ME AROUND. AND ONE DAY I WAS RETURNED HOME; BUT NOT WITHOUT A WARNING!



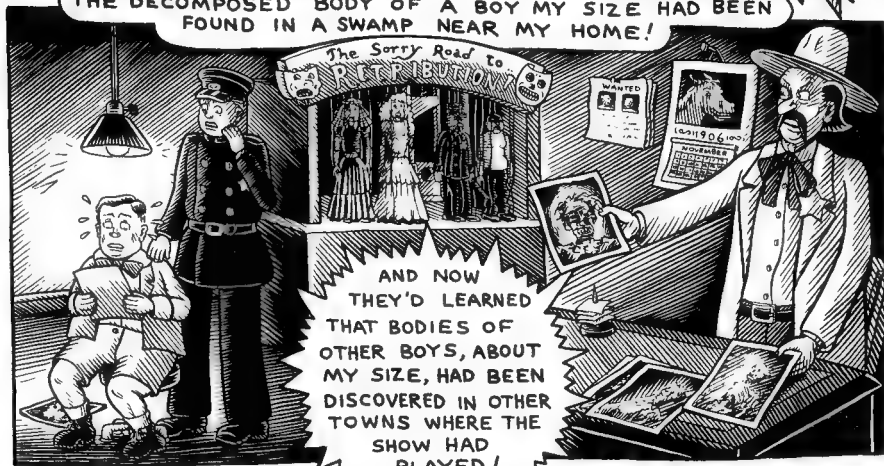
WE WERE WARNED THAT THE DEMON WAS ONLY SLEEPING. LOTS OF FOOD WOULD PROBABLY KEEP IT THAT WAY, BUT THERE WAS A POSSIBILITY THAT IT MIGHT SOME DAY, WAKE UP!



AND THE POLICE WERE EAGER TO QUESTION ME ABOUT THAT STRANGE PUPPET SHOW I'D APPARENTLY BEEN TRAVELING WITH.



IT TURNED OUT THAT NOT LONG AFTER I'D RUN AWAY, THE DECOMPOSED BODY OF A BOY MY SIZE HAD BEEN FOUND IN A SWAMP NEAR MY HOME!



AND NOW THEY'D LEARNED THAT BODIES OF OTHER BOYS, ABOUT MY SIZE, HAD BEEN DISCOVERED IN OTHER TOWNS WHERE THE SHOW HAD PLAYED!

I WANTED TO HELP AND DID MY BEST TO EXPLAIN THE STRANGELY HYPNOTIC FASCINATION OF THE SHOW!



IT DEPICTED THE RISE AND FALL OF A NOTORIOUS FRENCH CRIMINAL!

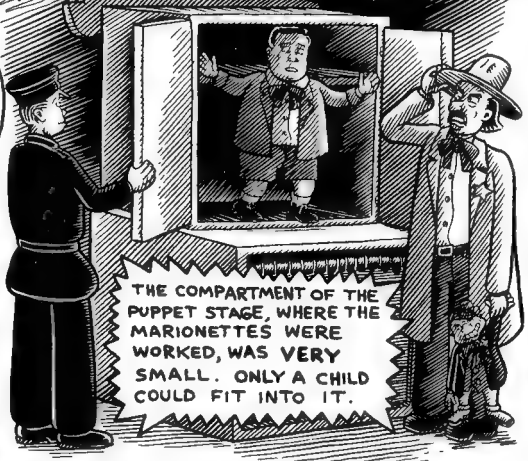


MOST OF THE PUPPETS WERE ORDINARY MARIONETTES; BUT THE PUPPET PORTRAYING THE MURDERER WAS MOST EXTRAORDINARY!



IT SEEMED TO MOVE WITHOUT STRINGS, AS THOUGH HE WAS ACTUALLY ALIVE!

THEN I SHOWED THEM THE REASON I'D BEEN LURED AWAY TO WORK IN THE SHOW...



THE COMPARTMENT OF THE PUPPET STAGE, WHERE THE MARIONETTES WERE WORKED, WAS VERY SMALL. ONLY A CHILD COULD FIT INTO IT.

BUT HOW DID THE OTHER PUPPET WORK? AH, THAT WAS THE QUESTION!  
AND AS I GAZED AT IT IN THE POLICE STATION, MY OWN CURIOSITY  
ABOUT IT, CAME FLOODING BACK TO ME.



I TOLD THEM ABOUT THE TIME I  
SNEAKED DOWN TO PEEK INTO THE  
CURTAINED OFF COMPARTMENT,  
WHERE THE PUPPETEER WORKED.

BUT AS MUCH AS I WANTED TO  
HELP, I SIMPLY COULDN'T REMEMBER  
WHAT I'D SEEN THAT DAY!



IT SEEMED THERE WAS NOTHING MORE TO DO BUT SEND ME BACK  
HOME AND LET MY FOLKS KEEP ME FAT; AND HOPEFULLY, SANE!



BUT SOON, DISTURBING HINTS OF THE OLD BLACK MAN'S WARNING BEGAN TO SHOW.

♪ JESUS LOVES ME, THIS I KNOW,...

...AN' A BOTTLE O' RUM!  
YO, HO, HO!

I DRIFTED INTO SHOW BUSINESS, ....AND WAS SUCCESSFUL, FOR AWHILE ; BUT THEN THE PROBLEM GOT EVEN WORSE!

SWEET  
SONGS  
By  
Smilin'  
Ed

SWEET  
ADOLINE,

SHE'S FULLA  
WINE

GWAN  
HOME!

BOO!

AN' TURPENTINE!  
HAW! HAW! HAW!

AND JOBS GOT SCARCE!

BUT SOMEHOW, I MANAGED TO  
GET A TRY-OUT IN A BRAND  
NEW FIELD: ..... RADIO!

AND THEN SLEEPING BEAUTY  
SAID, ...

YER OLD MAN  
LIVES INNA

GARBAGE CAN! HAW! HAW!

AND OH! WHAT A FIASCO  
THAT WAS! OR SO I THOUGHT.

WHEN THEY ASKED WHAT HAPPENED,  
I LAMELY TOLD THEM I HAD  
A FROG IN MY THROAT!

WELL, KEEP  
THAT FROG  
IN,...

...THE LISTENERS LIKE HIM.

FINALLY, ME, AND THE DEMON IN  
ME, HAD FOUND A WAY TO CO-EXIST.



SO FROGGY WAS BORN, AND I HAD ONE OF THE FIRST POPULAR RADIO KID SHOWS.

SO KIDS, EVERY MORNING AT TEN,...

POUR WATER IN YOUR RADIO, HAW! HAW!

NO! NO! NO! FROGGY, WHAT I MEANT TO SAY WAS,...

THROW IT OUT THE WINDOW! HAW! HAW! HAW!

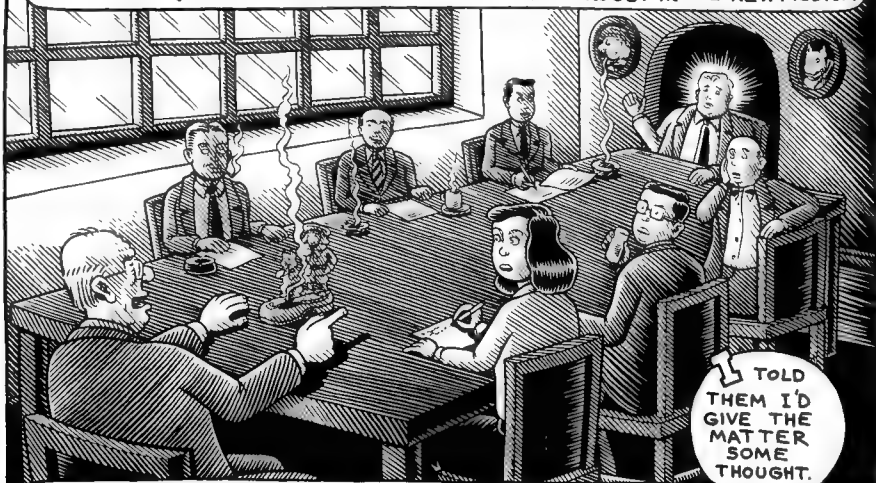
TUNE IN Smilin' Ed and Froggy!



SOON FROGGY DOLLS WERE A POPULAR KID'S TOY!



WHEN TELEVISION CAME IN, THE BIG QUESTION WAS, WHAT MANNER OF CARTOON OR PUPPET WOULD WE USE TO DEPICT FROGGY IN THE NEW MEDIUM.



BUT THE NEXT MORNING, THE PROBLEM HAD BEEN MYSTERIOUSLY SOLVED!



AND I SUDDENLY FELT STRANGELY FREE AND UNHAUNTED! IT WAS AS THOUGH THE DEMON THAT HAD BEEN IN ME WAS NOW IN THAT DOLL!

OF COURSE IT DID BRING BACK A FEW DISTURBING, HALF FORGOTTEN THOUGHTS ABOUT THAT OLD PUPPET SHOW; BUT ON THE OTHER HAND,



... I HADN'T FELT SO GOOD IN YEARS! AND THE T.V. BOYS JUST LOVED FROGGY!

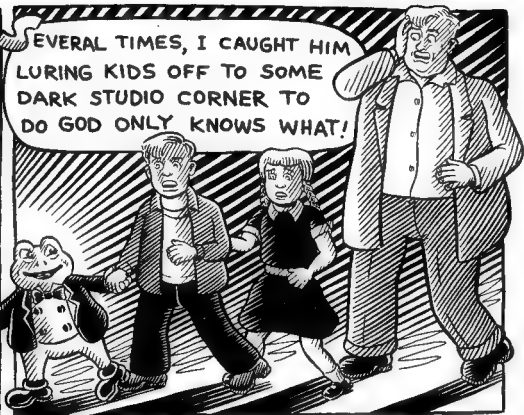


WHEN THEY ASKED ME HOW THE PUPPET WORKED, I TOLD THEM IT WAS A TRADE SECRET.

BUT NOW I HAD A NEW PROBLEM. I WAS FREE, BUT SO WAS FROGGY.



SEVERAL TIMES, I CAUGHT HIM LURING KIDS OFF TO SOME DARK STUDIO CORNER TO DO GOD ONLY KNOWS WHAT!



**T**O PREVENT ANY FUTURE PROBLEMS OF THAT SORT, I HAD ONE SHOT OF KIDS FILMED THAT WE COULD USE OVER AND OVER ON EACH SHOW.



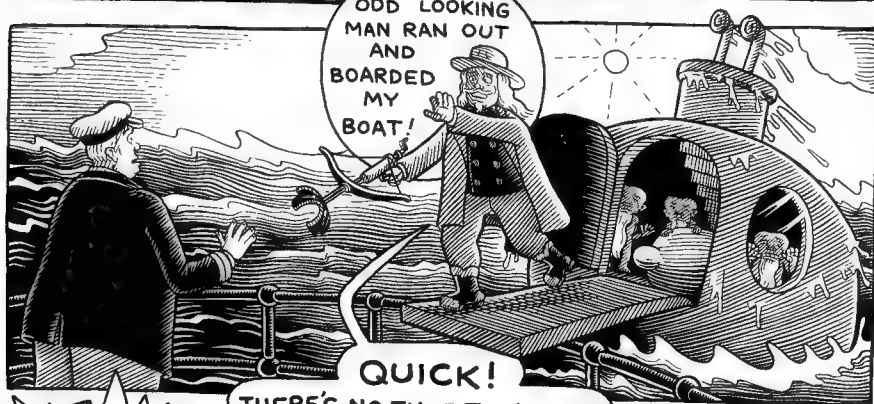
THEN CAME THAT  
FATEFUL DAY  
IN 1954.



BAH! DON'T  
EVEN REMIND  
ME!



**D**ECIDED  
TO TAKE A BREAK  
AND GO FOR A  
RIDE IN MY BRAND  
NEW CABIN  
CRUISER.



IN THE CABIN BELOW, TO MY ASTONISHMENT, WERE A BUNCH OF KIDS IN SOME KIND OF TRANCE!



WHO GAVE THE MAN AN OMINOUS  
PIECE OF TICKING CLOCK WORK.



HE DASHED UPSTAIRS WITH IT,



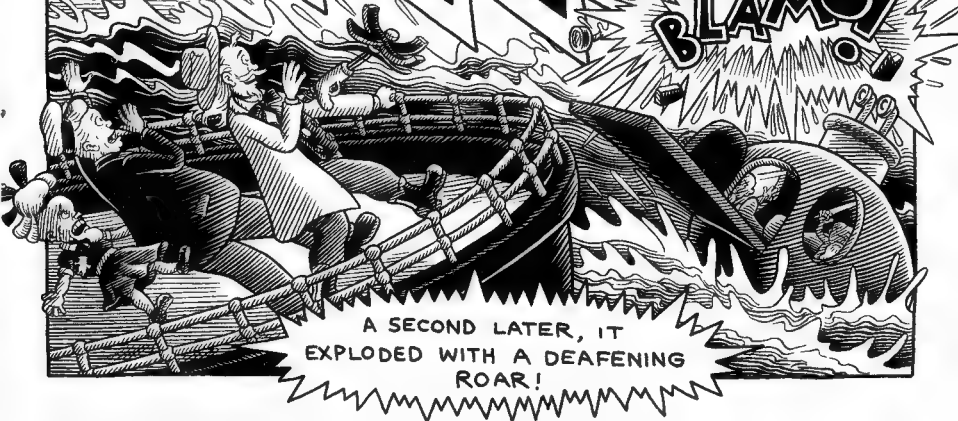
...AND  
SHOT IT  
INTO THE  
SKY!

**SPROING!**



**BLAMO!**

A SECOND LATER, IT  
EXPLODED WITH A DEAFENING  
ROAR!





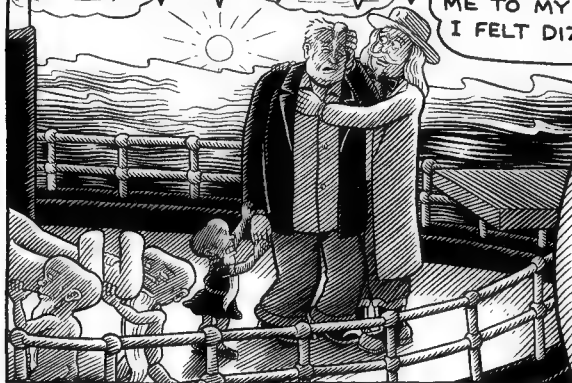
THEN I DISCOVERED  
THAT THE LITTLE GIRL  
WHO FOUND THIS BOMB  
WAS ACTUALLY A STRANGE  
BEARDED MIDGET, DISGUISED  
AS A GIRL!

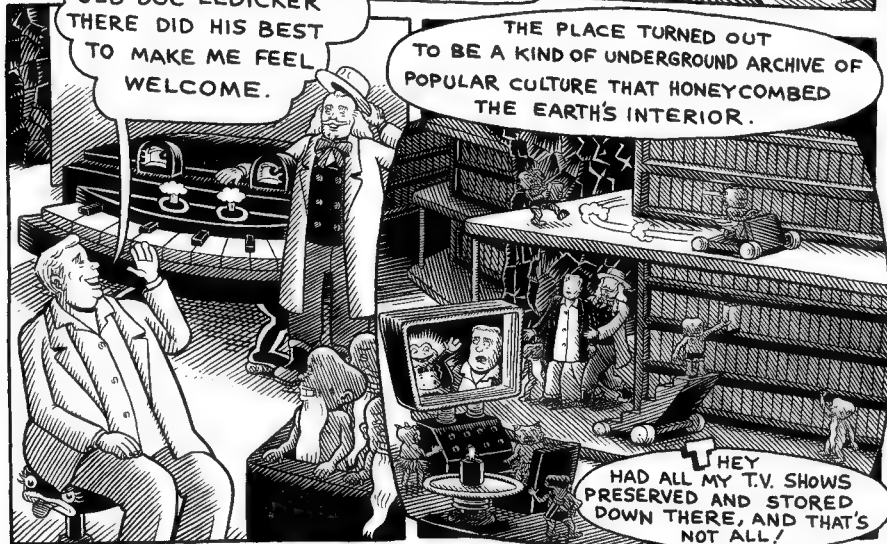
AND AS  
SOON AS THE  
BOAT SETTLED,  
SOMETHING  
EVEN MORE  
BIZARRE  
OCCURRED!



ELEVEN MORE OF THE MIDGET MEN BOARDED OUR BOAT  
CARRYING A LARGE, CRUDE WOODEN CARVING!

THEY HELPED  
ME TO MY FEET, BUT SUDDENLY  
I FELT DIZZY AND .....I GUESS  
I FAINTED!





THEY HAD FOOTAGE  
OF FROGGY AND ME  
GOING WAY BACK.


I WAS  
ASTOUNDED!

LEASTWAYS, UNTIL  
I GOT TO UNDERSTAND  
THESE LITTLE GUYS BETTER.

ALTHOUGH I'VE GOT TO  
ADMIT,

...AT THE TIME  
IT TOOK A HEAP OF CONVINCING.





DOC EXPLAINED  
TO ME HOW  
EVERYTHING  
THESE GUYS SEE,


... IS BEAMED TO A  
SPACE STATION, THIRTY  
THOUSAND MILES AWAY!

WHERE  
IT'S RECORDED ON  
WHAT THEY CALL  
LASER STORY  
CHIPS!


OH BROTHER!

HEY! WHAT IS  
THIS!  
THE  
TWILIGHT  
ZONE?


THESE STORY CHIPS  
ARE ALL COLLECTED AND STORED  
BY OUR HOSTS DOWN HERE,  
THE  
GREY ONES.



IN FACT THE WHOLE  
THING MADE ME DIZZY.  
AND I TOLD DOC  
I WANTED TO  
GO HOME.




DOC WAS NICE  
ABOUT IT; SAID HE WOULDN'T  
DREAM OF KEEPING ME HERE  
AGAINST MY WILL.



BUT HE TOLD ME  
FRANKLY THAT RETURNING  
ME MIGHT BE JUST  
A BIT DICEY.



YOU SEE, EVEN  
AS WE SPEAK,  
YOUR BODY  
IS BEING  
DISCOVERED  
ON YOUR  
CABIN  
CRUISER.



TO EXPLAIN, HE  
SHOWED ME A LASER STORY CHIP,  
MADE THE DAY BEFORE...



WHAT YOU JUST  
SAW WAS WHAT  
USED TO BE  
DESCRIBED AS  
A CHANGELING  
IN OLD FAIRY  
TALES.

SOME  
MIGHT CALL IT AN  
OLD FAIRY TRICK,  
BUT IT MIGHT BE  
CHARACTERIZED AS  
AN ADVANCED  
FORM OF HYPNOTIC  
SUGGESTION.

TO BE CONTINUED...



# THE zERO zERO BOOKSHELF

## KIM DEITCH gALORE!

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**SPECIAL BONUS OFFER:** Order any combination of Kim Deitch items from this page and get a 10% discount! And don't miss "The Strange Secret of Molly O'Dare" in *ZERO ZERO #6* through #8!

## zERO zERO back issues

**ZERO ZERO #1 (March/April 1995):** Big debut issue, featuring Ted Stearns' "Fuzz and Pluck," The Man With the Big Head" by David Holzmann, Frank Stack's "New Adventures of Jesus," plus Pat Moriarty and Charles Bukowski, Max Andersson, Glenn Head, Henriette Valium, the first Collier strip, and a Pantar cover! \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #2 (May/June 1995):** Every issue from here on features "The Chuckling Whatsit" by Richard Sala. Also, Mack White's "Homunculus," "Car-Boy" by Max Andersson, new "Trashman" story by Spain, David Mazzucchelli, Mats!?, and more. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #3 (July 1995):** ZZ debuts from Skip Williamson and Rick Altergott, Max Andersson's "Loita," plus Mark Newgarden, "Fuzz and Pluck," and a cover by Henriette Valium. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #4 (August 1995):** "Meat Box" by Kaz and Georgarakis premieres, plus Carol Tyler, Max Andersson, Mark Beyer, a Ted Stearns "dream" story, and Al Columbia's notorious "I Was Killing When Killing Wasn't Cool." \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #5 (Sept./Oct. 1995):** Joe Coleman cover! Chris Ware frontispiece! Justin Green back cover! Plus Kim Deitch, extra-long Andersson Car-Boy story, "Meat Box," and Homunculus." \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #6 (Nov./Dec. 1995):** Kim Deitch premieres "The Strange Secret of Molly O'Dare"! Plus "Fuzz and Pluck," Skip Williamson, Penny Van Horn, and Rick Altergott. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #7 (Jan./Feb. 1996):** "Molly O'Dare" continues! 18-page "Best World" cover story by Bill Griffith! Plus Max Andersson, Gilbert Hernandez, Archer Prewitt, and more. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #8 (March/April 1996):** Extra-long anniversary issue, with 2-color "Sol'Boy story by Archer Prewitt, Al Columbia, the end of "Molly O'Dare," Henriette Valium, "Homunculus" and "Fuzz and Pluck," and a cover by Charles Burns. \$5.95

**ZERO ZERO #9 (May/June 1996):** Snappy Sammy Smoot returns in a new story and cover by Skip Williamson! Sam Henderson and Stephanie Blanquet lose their ZZ cherries, the first story by Susan Catherine and Oscar Zarate, and a Valium back cover. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #10 (July 1996):** Ultra-groovy Drew Friedman cover! Eight Henriette Valium strips! A "Monroe" story by Sam Henderson! Max Andersson, Aleksandar Zograf, Jeff Johnson, more! \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #11 (August 1996):** Dave Cooper's "Suckle" (which will run from #11 to #16 and #18 to #20) premieres! Plus Ted Stearns, Kaz, David Mazzucchelli, Max Andersson, and Roy Tompkins. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #12 (Sept./Oct. 1996):** Max Andersson's 15-page "Death," his biggest story since *Picky*! P. Revers and Joakim Pirinen make their ZZ debuts, plus Michael Dougan and a back cover by Dan Clowes. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #13 (Nov./Dec. 1996):** Extra-long "Fuzz and Pluck" chapter, plus Sam Henderson, Skip Williamson, "Homunculus," Idiotland by Doug Allen, and Jim Blanchard! \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #14 (Jan./Feb. 1997):** Stephanie Blanquet cover, plus two, count 'em two, "Silent Stories"! Also, Mike Diana, Terry LaBan, and a Kim Deitch back cover. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #15 (March 1997):** Joe Sacco heads for Bosnia with 15-page "Christmas With Karadzic," first major story since Palestine!

Plus Revers, Valium, Henderson, Columbia, and the serials. \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #16 (April/May 1997):** Big ol' Brute of an anniversary issue, with a full-color "Jimmy Corrigan" story by Chris Ware, striking 2-color stories by Al Columbia ("Blood Clot Boy") and Henriette Valium ("The Man in the Sewer"), a new chapter of

"MeatBox," plus Joakim Pirinen, Penny van Horn, Skip Williamson, P. Revers, Aleksandar Zograf, Krystine Kryttre, and a cover by Kaz. \$5.95

**ZERO ZERO #17 (June 1997):** Michael Dougan's terrifying "Double Booked"! Penultimate "Chuckling Whatsit," new "Fuzz and Pluck" chapter, the divine Miss Renée French, and more! \$3.95

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**ZERO ZERO #19 (August 1997):** First installment of "Pop. 666" by Semerano and Ghermandi! Final episode of "Meat Box"! Plus "Crumple," "Johnny Gun" by Max Andersson, and short strips and illustrations by Blanquet, Glenn Head, and Jeff Johnson! \$3.95

**ZERO ZERO #20 (Sept.-Oct. 1997):** The grand finale of "Crumple" The American premiere of Lewis Trondheim! Cover and feature strip by Glenn Head! Another two-color masterpiece by Al Columbia! Plus a full-color strip by M.L. Teague, and chapters of "Pop. 666" and "Homunculus"! \$3.95



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